THE VEDANTA KESARI

"Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

"Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold
The Upanishads and believe that 'I am the Atman."

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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PRAYER.

ॐ

न वै याचे राज्यं न च कनकमाणिक्यविभवं
न याचेऽहं रम्यां सकलजनकाम्यां वरवधूम् ।
सदा काले काले प्रमथपतिना गीतचरितो
जगन्नाथः स्वामी नयनपथगामी भवतु मे ॥
हर त्वं संसारं द्रुततरमसारं सुरपते
हर त्वं पापानां विततिमपरां यादवपते ।
अहो दीनेऽनाथे निहितमचलं निश्चितपदं
जगन्नाथः स्वामी नयनपथगामी भवतु मे ॥

Oh Lord ! I do not beg either for kingdom or for wealth of gold and jewels. Nor do I ask for a beautiful wife, so eagerly desired by men. Thy glory is always sung even by the great God Siva. O Mighty Lord of the Universe ! Reveal Thyself unto me.

Oh God of gods ! Pray, remove from my mind all charms for this vain and fleeting world. Lord, take away the heaps of heinous sins from me. Oh God, Thou bestoweth Thy unfailing mercy ever upon the miserable and the helpless. O Mighty Lord of the Universe ! Reveal Thyself unto me.

SRI CHAITANYA.

SPIRITUAL TALKS OF SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

(At the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram, Kankhal, Hardwar)

Every one wants happiness. Who would like to undergo pain and misery ? But how to obtain that happiness ? Certainly, not by running after the fleeting pleasures of the senses, and ignoring Him, Who is the abode of all happiness. He has created many play-things to delude the human mind. Throw away all these and pray to Him. He will then hasten to take you in His arms. Do you want God or playthings ? You cannot have both at the same time.

I tell you, you have had play enough ; now it is high time to give it up and call upon the Mother. When a child is fond of play, the mother gives it some toys to play with and while away its time. But the child that does not care for any play she carries with her. Happy is the child that sits in its mother's lap. It not only enjoys the play but also has the happiness arising out of its mother's company ; whereas the child that is engaged in play enjoys it no doubt but also exposes itself to risks incidental to play. It may be that its toys will break or it will pick up a quarrel with its playmates and get beaten as well. But the child in the mother's lap experiences no such troubles. It is always happy and knows full well that the mother will take care of it and supply all its wants.

The parable of the mango grove told by Sri Rama-krishna is very instructive. "You have come to eat the mangoes. Why do you bother yourself about the number of trees, branches, leaves, etc., in the garden ? Eat the mangoes and be satisfied." You have come into this world for the realisation of God. Accomplish this object first of all and fulfil your life's mission. Solve

your own problem and equip yourself for the life's journey. Struggle hard and become deathless by tasting the Immortal Bliss. Pray to Him day and night. In whatever form you think of Him it will certainly do you good. Whatever form or name appeals to you, take it up sincerely and pray to Him. You are sure to get a vison of Him. Parvati once asked Mahadeva how Sachchidananda could be realised. The reply was—"Through Faith."

You have been already shown the right path. Follow it with faith, patience and perseverance. No more waste your time in discussing the forms and details of your Sadhana. Pray to Him in any way you please, and you are sure to get His blessings. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "A sweetened bread will ever taste sweet in whatever way you begin to eat it." You are as it were sitting under the *Kalpataru* (wish-yielding tree) and you shall get whatever you ask for.

Don't think yourselves too clever. The crow thinks itself very clever but it always lives on filth. Those who are too clever in this world get cheated in the long run.

With a faith that knows no wavering plunge yourselves in deep meditation. Do not get disheartened if after a little practice you do not realise God. The ocean is full of precious gems, but you may not get them at the first dive. My boys, once again I enjoin you, have firm faith in the words of your Guru, and try to get absorbed in deep meditation. Be sure, sooner or later you will have a vison of the Lord. Do not allow your mind to get distracted. Keep steadily and patiently to your Sadhana. His grace will descend on you in due time. Suppose you wish to see a great man. You have first to see and satisfy his attendants. Similarly to obtain the grace of the Lord you have to seek the help of godly men and undergo many spiritual practices. Knowing Him to be dearer than the dearest, pray to Him with a yearning heart for His

grace and vision. Cry unto the Lord like a child. Incessant cry cannot but make the mother run towards it. So also with the Lord. He reveals Himself to him who unceasingly prays for His grace and vision.

Shake off your slumber, and seek the grace of the Lord with steadfast devotion. Make the mind one-pointed like the mariner's compass. In whatever direction the ship may sail the compass will always point to the north, thus keeping the ship to its route. Just so with the human mind. If it is fixed on God there will be nothing to fear. By chance if one falls amidst bad environments even then his faith and devotion will remain unshaken. The moment he hears any talk about God he becomes mad with divine love—just as the flint lying under water for a hundred years when taken out and struck emits sparks without fail. Those who have been favoured with a vison of the Lord have their mind always fixed on Him. They will have no taste for anything except the talk about Him and the company of holy men. Like the cast-away leaf tossed to and fro by the wind, be content to remain wherever you are placed by the Lord. Do not have any will or desire of your own.

Your mind is now pure and untainted. Try to keep it in this state always. The spotless mind is like a dry match stick. It ignites the moment you strike it, but it is no good if it gets wet. You may go on striking it but it will only break into pieces. Similarly if the mind once becomes soiled you will find it extremely difficult to restore it to its former purity.

EDITORIAL NOTES

The Missionary Spirit in Hinduism

"India," says Swami Vivekananda, "was once a great missionary power. Hundreds of years before England was converted to Christianity, Buddha sent out missionaries to convert the world of Asia to his doctrine." Even as early as the third century before Christ, king Asoka sent Buddhist preachers as far as the Hellenistic kingdoms in Africa and Europe. And not only Buddhism but also its spiritual mother Hinduism has ever been a missionary faith though the methods of conversion followed by the two might have been somewhat different. Besides assimilating innumerable aboriginal peoples and foreign invading hordes, Hinduism spread its noble influence over lands beyond seas and mountains, and brought new races and tribes into its mighty fold. But freedom was the condition of this growth. With the loss of political power, the Hindus became the object of onslaught by the religion and culture of the foreign conquerors. And for centuries the most vital problem before the Hindu society has been not one of expansion but of self-protection, and this by raising defensive walls of rules and restrictions round its votaries. In consequence Hinduism has had to become passive and exclusive. But even during this slow pulsation of its life, the silent process of absorption has been going on unimpeded as ever. And now through the grace of Providence the soul of Hinduism is reasserting itself in all its vigour. Passivity is giving place to activity, and exclusiveness to the dynamic spirit of expansion. To save itself from the attack of alien faiths perverting its adherents, Hinduism is trying to be aggressively missionary like the militant religions of the world. There seems to be a tendency in some of our present day Hindu movements

to lay greater stress on the formal than on the cultural conversion of new adherents. Hinduism has been placed between the horns of a dilemma. Unless it freely admits new members into its fold it dwindles in strength, while if it receives fresh converts without converting their hearts, it strays away from its very ideals of assimilation and growth.

Conversion, Formal and Spiritual

True conversion is a spiritual transformation that benefits both the convert and the community to which he comes to belong. Formal conversion, on the other hand, has nothing to do with the spirit of religion. It makes the convert lead only a life of hypocrisy and lowers his own cultural tone as well as that of the society into which he is taken. The missionaries of Islam and Christianity have ever been trying their utmost to swell their numbers without caring very much to make the converts imbibe their respective cultures. The inordinate passion of zealots for converting the whole world to their faiths has made them seek the support of the State, and propagate their doctrines even at the point of the sword. This has led to the lowering of the standards of the Islamic and Christian religions in different parts of the world. As a matter of fact there exists among the masses of those two faiths more of bigotry and fanaticism than true toleration and devotion. But even in spite of the present degeneration due to political and other causes, the average Hindu is able to maintain a cultural level higher than that of the followers of other religions. This has been possible only because Hinduism has ever been true to the ideal of evolutionary conversion and slow absorption of foreign elements into its fold. But militant Islam and Christianity seem to be giving rise to a militant form of Hinduism at present. And some of our modern Hindu reform movements are anxious to follow the Semitic method of propagating the faith. It is their indomitable

love for Hinduism that urges them to take steps for preventing Hindu society from dwindling. This again is responsible for their attempts to increase the Hindu population by the free admission of perverts and converts from other faiths. But to be true to the soul of Hinduism great stress should be laid on instilling its ideals into the hearts of those coming into its fold.

Stemming the Tide of Conversion

To stop effectively the conversion of its followers to other faiths, Hinduism must remove the causes that make this change of religion possible at all. The charm of economic uplift and social betterment are the two main reasons that make the Hindus of the so-called lower and depressed classes enter the fold of other religions. For arresting this movement towards alien faiths, organisations for the economic and social regeneration of the Hindu masses should be started all over the country. The work has no doubt been begun to some extent, but it should be conducted with greater intelligence and efficiency than at present. The narrow restrictions of caste and the curse of untouchability are to be removed by all possible means as early as possible. Attempts should be made to solve the economic problems of the masses by adopting improved means of agriculture and scientific farming, introducing cottage arts and industries, and organising co-operative societies devoted mainly to the welfare of the poor. Side by side with their social and economic improvement, the work for their moral and spiritual uplift should also be taken up in right earnest. In spite of their innate spiritual nature the Indian masses lack a clear conception of the higher ideals of religion. Owing to ignorance and superstition they are following various evil customs that are standing in the way of their progress. The great need of the hour is an all-round education on national lines. The entire heritage of the Hindu race is to be democratised

and thrown broadcast to all irrespective of caste or creed. The masses must be made to realise the glory of their ancient faith in its manifold aspects. In short they are to be elevated economically, socially, morally and spiritually. Speaking of the uplift of the masses says Swami Vivekananda—"Our masses are very good because poverty here is not a crime. Our masses are not violent. Our masses are much more civilized than European masses. We have to give them secular education. We have to follow the plan laid dcwn by our ancestors, that is, to bring all the ideals slowly down among the masses. Raise them slowly up, raise them to equality. Impart even secular knowledge through religion. . . . Keep the motto before you 'Elevation of the masses without injuring their religion.'" It is by raising the present deplorable condition of the people that their influx into other religions can be most successfully stopped. The surest way of stemming the tide of conversion is to remove its possibility altogether.

The Evils of Formal Conversion

The conversion of the poor Hindu to Christianity or Islam does not necessarily mean the triumph of the Gospel or the Koran. The main object of the change of creed as already pointed out is not spiritual illumination but the betterment of the social and economic condition of the convert. But material gain almost invariably proves to be a spiritual loss. What a sympathetic western writer speaks of the poor convert to Christianity is equally true of all who change their religions for merely material gain. "Where once he called on Vishnu or Shiva, he now turns a bewildered face up to the empty skies, shorn of the garments of his dreams. . . . All things that were natural and free to him, are wrong; all that he thought good is bad. He receives a vague, elusive, cold and unfamiliar maze of words in exchange for all the intimate and beloved

manifestation of his old belief. The new religion does not make him happy, because it is an imperfect system, imperfectly practised and taught." And not only the so-called convert but also his proselytising faith sustains a loss. It introduces into its body foreign elements which it is not able to assimilate. It thereby sows the seed of the degeneration of its distinctive culture. To say the least, formal conversion does incalculable harm to the cause of religion.

The Remedy

Hinduism has an infinite scope for true conversion and assimilation of new elements, both individual and collective. But should it also make formal conversion an inseparable part of its missionary activities? To this we say an emphatic "no." New converts should be freely admitted; perverts also should be re-converted. But the greatest care should be taken to Hinduise them all in life and thought as fully as possible. Otherwise, conversions for swelling the numbers will prove disastrous to the true spirit of religion. To stop the craze for the indiscriminate admission of new members into the various religious folds, the outlook of the preachers must be completely changed. Militant missionaries who vehemently denounce the religions of others must first of all try to live up to the ideals of their own faiths and then realise the essential truths lying at the back of all other faiths. To cure the disease we must go to its very root cause. "The remedy," observes a writer in the *Indian Review*, "lies in establishing the fundamental principle that 'all paths lead to God,' that there is no religion which alone can claim to be the highest. Ramakrishna Paramahansa of Bengal may be said to be the prophet of this attitude. He laid stress on 'Jeeverdaya' and 'Shiver bhakti,' love for the living and devotion to God, and 'Dharmasamanwaya', a synthesis of religions. Dean Inge the other day uttered a

very sage remark when he said that no longer should the Western missionary busy himself so much with making more converts as with living a Christian ideal himself Such an attitude will turn our eyes inwards and we shall think more of becoming good and religious than of trying to make others good and religious."

Sri Ramakrishna's Ideal of a Religious's Preacher

"He alone is the real teacher," says Sri Ramakrishna, "who is illuminated by the light of Knowledge." The religious missionary must first of all strive to realise the truths of his religion before he attempts to preach them to others. But unfortunately the ordinary preacher has little spiritual experience to his credit. He takes to preaching as a profession and trades in religion. That is why he introduces into the holy domain of religion the strife and competition of the world. It is for want of efficient teachers that religious life is at a low ebb to-day. The greatest task before all missionary bodies is to train properly and send out the right type of teachers for the spiritual regeneration of those they want to save. The cause of religion will be better served if the preacher would proclaim the glory of his faith more by his own life than by the denunciation of the religions of others. He alone can win true converts to his faith who has converted himself in spirit. Such a great soul becomes a preacher by Divine right, and draws round him sincere men and women by the magnetic influence of his life. It is this ideal of a true preacher that Sri Ramakrishna proclaims when he says—"Of itself does the bee come to the full-blown flower when its sweet aroma is wafted by the breeze. The ants come of themselves to the spot where sweets are placed. No one need invite the bee or the ant. So when a man becomes pure and perfect the sweet influence of his character is diffused everywhere, and all who seek for Truth are naturally drawn towards him, and he need not be going

about in search of an audience to listen to him." Religious strifes will stop and peace and harmony will reign on earth if the missionaries of religions would hold before them this noble ideal embodied in the lives of all the greatest teachers of the world.

THE UPANISHADIC REVELATION OF TRUTH

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

Though the Upanishads are among the most widely read books of the world, very few persons in the West have been able to realise the evolution and ascent of thought in those scriptures, the sublimest of the productions of Hindu genius. Some of them think that the Upanishads are a medley of philosophic theories such as Monism, Idealism, Pluralism, etc. Others think that the works contain a few gems of intuitive genius imbeded in a rocky mine of guess and superstition, yet others consider them to be relics of a barbaric age. These superstitions of scholarship have found echoes in India also.

Among the basic misconceptions about the Indian genius are the ideas represented by the vague words determinism, fatalism, and pessimism. We are told that the Hindu thought in general, and the Upanishads in particular, are vitiated by the above defects. Strangely enough these words are hurled at works which declare the eternal and limitless freedom and bliss of the Soul :—आनन्दरूपममृतं यद्विभाति । That Which shines, being of the nature of bliss and immortality.

The great merit of the Upanishads lies in their appeal to the highest elements of our nature and in their power to captivate the mystic as well as the philanthropist, the thinker as well as the man of emotion and imagination. The attempt to study them apart from the remaining portions of the Vedas is foredoomed to failure. There is no difference of doctrine between the Samhita and the Upanishads, though there is a difference of emphasis.

The entire search of the Upanishads is in the direction of the central spiritual unity. After wandering amidst the labyrinths of modern cosmogonies seeking the origin of things in matter or protoplasm or *elan Vital*—all of them seeking in matter the *matrix*

of life—it is refreshing to turn to the Upanishadic Seers seeking in the spirit the *matrix* of matter and life.

तज्जलानीति शान्त उपासीत ।

—Adore IT with a tranquil mind as That Which creates and preserves and destroys the universe—*Chhandogya Upanishad.*

यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । येन
जातानि जीवन्ति । यत्प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति ।
तद्विजिज्ञासस्व । तद्ब्रह्मेति ।

—Know That to be Brahman Whence every thing is born Which sustains every born thing and into Which all enter at the time of dissolution—*Taittiriya Upanishad.*

सदेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीत् एकमेवाद्वितीयं ।

—Pure existence alone, O child, existed at first. It was one and without a second—*Chhandogya Upanishad.*

सोऽकामयत बहुस्यां प्रजायेयेति ।

—He desired—Let me become many—*Taittiriya Upanishad.*

तस्माद्वा एतस्मादात्मन आकाशः संभूतः । आका
शाद्वायुः । वायोरग्निः । अग्नेरापः । अद्भ्यः पृथिवी ।

—From this Atman ether was born ; from ether mind was born ; from mind fire was born ; from fire water was born ; from water earth was born—*Taittiriya Upanishad.*

स्वभावमेके कवयो वदन्ति कालं तथान्ये
परिमुह्यमानाः । देवस्यैष महिमा तु लोके
येनेदं भ्राम्यते ब्रह्मचक्रम् ॥

—Some of the deluded seers and singers call it Nature and others call it Time. The Brahmic wheel which revolves in the world is due to the glory of God—*Swetaswetaropanishad.*

Even more valuable than this unwavering declaration about origins is the Upanishadic discussion of the nature of the enquirer himself. By the analysis of the three states of consciousness and by a vigorous process of self-scrutiny and self-dissection, the truth about the unity of the Atman is reached and proclaimed. In the Upanishads named above we find a clear and successful attempt to isolate the Atman from Its five Sheaths (Pancha kosas). Some Scholars have been bold enough to declare that the idea of transmigration is an un-Aryan idea. Professor Macdonnell says : "It seems more probable that the Aryan settlers received the first impulse in this direction from the *aboriginal inhabitants* of India." (*History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 387). He says further :

"The Aryan Indians borrowed the idea from the aborigines, they certainly deserve the credit of having elaborated out of it, the theory of an unbroken chain of existences, intimately connected with the moral principles of requital," This view is thoroughly incorrect. In the 16th hymn in Mandala X of the *Rig-Veda* we find the following verse :

सूर्यं चक्षु र्गच्छतु वातमात्माद्यां च
गच्छ पृथिवीं च धर्मणा ।
आपोवा गच्छयदि तत्र तेहितं ओषधीषु
प्रतितिष्ठा शरीरै ।

—May the eye-sense reach the sun and my Atman (energy) the wind. According to thy merit go to heaven or to the earth. Go to the waters if there is benefit there or reach embodiments in plants.

This passage shows that the soul is to go to the heaven or to the earth according to the actions and qualities (Dharma). The doctrine of transmigration is more clearly stated in the 58th hymn, 1—12, in Mandala X of the same Veda. The Rishi says therein that he can by the power of his hymn call back the soul "which may have gone to heaven or earth or to the four-cornered globe." Roth and Bohtlingk and Geldner controvert the view of Oldenberg who holds that the doctrine of transmigration does not exist in the Rig-Veda, and refer to the Rig-Veda I, 164, 3) and 38. These hymns state that the soul moves backwards and forwards and returns frequently to the earth.

The idea of transmigration is expressly declared in the Upanishads. The *Katha Upanishad* says सस्यमिव मर्त्यः पच्यते सस्यमिवा जायते पुनः—Man ripens like corn and like corn he is born again.

The *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* states the doctrine in the most explicit terms. The *Chhandogya Upanishad* also refers to the Devayāna and Pitrayāna of the departed soul. From the above view of the soul, we proceed by a natural evolution of thought, to the means of attaining the highest Bliss. The Upanishads insist equally on mental and physical purity. Because such purity is the only means which leads to devotion and knowledge and realisation. In the *Katha Upanishad* it is said :

नाविरतो दुश्चरितान्नाशान्तो नासमाहितः ।
नाशान्तमानसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैनमाप्नुयात् ॥

—He cannot be attained by one who has not abstained from evil ways nor has attained concentration nor reached mental tranquillity. We can attain Him by realised knowledge.

Hence abstention from sin and composure and steadfastness and purity of mind are the *sine qua non* of acquiring true blessedness of spirit. Equally important is the Upanishadic stress on physical purity. Again, it is the first and most essential portion of the food we take that moulds and shapes and energises the mind.

अन्नमयं हि सोम्य मनः ॥

—The mind, O child, is of the essence of the food.

Chhandogya Upanishad.

आहारशुद्धौ सत्त्वशुद्धिः
सत्त्वशुद्धौ ध्रुवा स्मृतिः स्मृतिलम्भे
सर्वग्रन्थीनां विप्रमोक्षः ॥

—The Satwic purity comes only when there is purity of what we take in. When there is a Satwic purity then comes steady memory. We attain freedom from all ties when we attain steadiness of memory—*Chhandogya Upanishad.*

In the above passage the word Ahara is interpreted by Sri Ramanujacharya as meaning food and by Sri Sankaracharya as meaning all the sense-impressions and sense-enjoyments which are allowed to come in through the gate of the senses. That is why in India mysticism, metaphysics and morality are but interrelated and interlinked entities. Morality is not an end in itself. Nor can mental purity exist apart from physical purity. Mysticism is not a mood but a blossom of morality. Metaphysics is not a mere mental jugglery but a deep spiritual experience. The hortatory convocation address in the *Taittiriya Upanishad*, the concepts of Sreyas and Preyas in the *Kathopanishad*, and the concept of enjoyment by renunciation in the *Isha Upanishad* give us a perfect system of ethics as the scaffolding of a perfected mysticism and metaphysics.

Upon the purified mind shines the resplendent vision of God. Without such vision the religion of works and activism is a vain weariness of flesh and spirit. God is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. He is the source and basis of everything. He is immanence and transcendence. By devotion born of purity of mind and of body we realise Him.

तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति

--By His radiance all this shines—*Katha Upanishad.*

परास्य शक्ति र्विविधैव श्रूयते ।
स्वाभाविकी ज्ञान बल क्रियाच ॥

—His power is said to be supreme and diverse. Knowledge, power and action are natural to Him—*Swetaswetara Upanishad.*

तेनेदं पूर्णं पुरुषेण सर्वं—This whole is filled with the Purusha—*Swetaswetara Upanishad.*

The Upanishads do not stop with this declaration of the nature of God. They further declare that by Jnana as the result of Bhakti and Yoga one can realise the transcendental oneness of the soul and the Oversoul in the blissful Absolute.

And this Absolute Brahman is described: सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म—Brahma is Infinite, Being, and Knowledge.—*Taittiriya Upanishad.* अयमात्मा ब्रह्म—The soul is Brahman—*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.* अहं ब्रह्मास्मि—I am Brahman — *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.* तत्त्वमसि—Thou art That—*Chhandogya Upanishad* सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म—All this is Brahman—*Chhandogya Upanishad.* योऽसावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि—That Purusha is myself– *Isha Upanishad.*

Thus the supreme value of the Upanishadic revelation of Truth is in the revelation of the Para-Vidya leading to the Supreme Realisation. Such a realisation can be had here and now (अत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते). With the aid of the Sad-Guru and the Sat-Shastra and our disciplined purity and endeavour the highest Goal can be reached—the Goal of infinite eternal freedom and bliss described in the *Mundaka Upanishad* as आनन्दरूपममृतं यद् विभाति—That Which shines being of the nature of bliss and immortality.

SPIRITUAL VALUE.

By A. Govindacharya Swami.

As a Sanskrit couplet says, three wayfarers one an ascetic, another a roue and the third a dog saw a beautiful damsel passing by. The feeling of the ascetic when he looked at her was that she was as good as a corpse fit to be shunned. The feeling excited in the roue was that of a debauchee, while the dog felt that her flesh would serve as an excellent food for him. Thus the selfsame object evoked three different kinds of feelings utterly at variance with one another carrying three different values. But these are the judgments from a worldly standpoint. When on the other

hand we find Arjuna wooed by Urvasi, the courtezan of Indra's court, falling at her feet as if she were his mother, we are struck by a non-worldly and spiritual value. In our own days we have the example of the saintly Ramakrishna who worshipped his own wife, demonstrating thereby to the world at large that there can be a state in which all sex cravings can be made conspicuous by their absence through the culturing of an intense yearning for God. This is yet a higher stage in the ladder of Spiritual values.

We may dwell on some other varieties of values taken up at random from the great epic *Ramayana.* Sita the holy consort of Sri Rama, once exclaimed :

यः त्वया सह सः स्वर्गो ।
निरयो यः त्वया विना ॥

"Thy company, Rama, is my heaven. Separation from thee is my hell."

But the reverse was the case with Kaikeyi, the step-mother of Rama, for separation from Rama was heaven to her, whereas his staying in Ayodhya was deemed as hell. Thus the appraisement of facts by human beings varies according to the feelings which sway their heart. A sinner does not see what a saint sees. And so it is said in the Gita :

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥

"To the spiritual man, the world is full of darkness which to the worldly man is full of light, but what to the former is effulgence is darkness to the latter". This very same idea is reflected beautifully in Christ's abdication of the whole world to save his precious soul and in the sale by Faust of his self to Mephistophiles for worldly considerations.

In the Ramayana again we find that when Sugriva, the monkey friend of Sri Rama, returned unscathed after discomfiting the fiend Ravana, Sri Rama addressed him thus :—

त्वयि किंचित् समपन्ने किं कार्यं सीताया मम ।

"Had anything untoward happened to thee, O Sugriva, in your encounter with Ravana, Sita for whose sake so much of our united effort has been put in would then in my view become a person utterly worthless to me." This is the value of genuine friendship which would not in the least be affected by any consideration whatsoever even it be that of the closest and holy tie with one's better half. Sita's value to Sri Rama would have been completely ignored by him had even the slightest injury

happened to Sugriva. Sugriva was all in all to Rama and he was of the utmost value to him—so much so that लोकनाथः पुराभुत्वा सुग्रीव नाथमिच्छति "having himself been the Lord of the whole world, Sri Rama would have Sugriva as his Lord." Here the value of friendship coupled with Sugriva's devotedness to his master's concerns was of a spiritual worth. And this raised Sugriva to a dignity and position far surpassing that accorded to Sri Rama himself.

Another value is evinced by Sri Rama towards Vibhishana—the brother of Ravana, his antagonist. Vibhishana left Lanka when he found that his brother could never be brought to his senses. He repaired to Rama's camp and begged of the sentinels, Sugriva and others for admittance to his presence. They took him for a spy from Ravana and were reluctant to grant his request. Making him stand outside they went to Sri Rama and told him that a spy had come seeking admission to his presence and requested his permission to slay him. But Rama did not yield to their request but on the other hand made them understand that even if Ravana himself would come to his doors he will be welcome. For, said he, "I am the asylum for all refugees. I have incarnated on earth to demonstrate the truth of the Saranagati Dharma." So saying, he commanded them to allow Vibhishana to come to his presence. It is apparent that here the divine law of grace is the spiritual value involved.

The characteristic feature of Vibhishana and Sugriva is that both of them denied themselves a material kingdom for the sake of divine service. Their ideal of life was spirituality, was the service of Rama, the God incarnate, and this they considered as the only riches to be coveted. Sugriva incurred the wrath of his own brother Bali in order to be able to serve God, and so did Vibhishana who renouncing all his immense wealth ran away from his brother and took refuge at the feet of Sri Rama with the sole object of serving the Lord. All these go to show that true life is that which is consecrated to the service of the Lord on the score of its having the highest spiritual value. As regards this view of life no two religions on the face of the earth disagree. Of all the philosophies in the world the Vedanta lays the greatest stress on it.

Exactly the same ideal of unworldliness is upheld in the Dravidian Sri Vaishnava literature also. It is said that the God-

intoxicated saint Tirumazhisai Alwar was once confronted with Rudra, one of the deities of the Vedic Trinity. Pleased with the Alwar's penance Rudra appeared before him and bade him ask for a boon. Thereupon the saint inquired if he could give Moksha or liberation from all kinds of bondage to which the soul is subject. But when Rudra expressed his inability to grant this boon the Alwar said, "Then, please go your way." But it would be beneath the dignity of a being of my prestige to return without giving some boon or other", rejoined Rudra. "Then let this thread," retorted the saint, "with which I am repairing my tattered cloth pass through the eye of this needle." Rudra was abashed and withdrew. For, the saint he found was made of such a spiritual stuff that he set no value on worldly goods and therefore could ask for none of them. This unworldliness is the characteristic feature of all religious geniuses born in this world with a mission to divert the gaze of mankind from worldly tinsels to spiritual riches which are theirs by birthright. But alas! mankind being somehow or other caught in worldly enjoyments is blind to its own heritage. Man is the heir-apparent to the kingdom of God,—so declare all the apostles of God. His ultimate value therefore actually rests elsewhere than in this world which unfortunately he takes to be his only concern. Not to speak of the highly evolved men such as the Messiahs of God or the apostles appointed by Him, we have also examples of wise men known for their broad outlook on life such as Keshab Chunder Sen. In his lecture on *Regenerating Faith* Keshab Chunder Sen says as follows: "The regenerate man is unto the world and its temptations an altogether dead man. Place before him all the treasures of the world, they don't excite his avarice; ply his senses with the most enticing objects of sensual delight, his senses cannot even feel their influence; offer him all manner of selfish enjoyments, these have no power over him, for all senses and carnal affections and self-love are dead, and he is impervious to temptations as a dead body." The elevated soul is dead to the world which has no absolute worth, but is alive unto God who is his all-value.

In the Mahabharata one very instructive incident is chronicled. Duryodhana and his brothers who formed the Kaurava party were fraricidal to the Pandavas, their cousin brothers. The Pandavas were the devotees of Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna to avoid an unhappy strife amongst the cousins went on an embassy to the Court of Duryodhana, but it proved unsuccessful. Although the Kauravas refused to fulfil the wishes of Sri Krishna, they still wanted to

honour him as a plenipotentiary by inviting him to a dinner. But Sri Krishna declined to accept their invitation saying,

द्विषदन्नम् न भोक्तव्यम्
द्विषन्तं नैव भोजयेत् ।
पाण्डवान् द्विषसि राजन्
मम प्राणा हि पांडवाः

"No food should be taken in the enemy's camp; nor should the enemy be fed. O king Duryodhana! (Thou art my enemy because) Thou art the enemy of my devotees, the Pandavas" "Again in the same epic is narrated the incident of Sri Krishna's condescension to go to the humble cottage of Vidura—Vidura who was unlike Duryodhana and his brothers, humble and great in spirituality. Sri Krishna gladly partook of the food so lovingly offered to him by Vidura and felt greatly pleased because Vidura's food was pure and worthy. Here we find two different values attached to one and the same thing—food, viz., the value of impurity to the food offered by a non-devotee and the value of purity to that offered by a devotee. The former is based on material value and the latter on the spiritual value. Another truth is also demonstrated here by the behaviour of Sri Krishna. His hatred to the Kauravas was engendered by the hatred to his devotees—the Pandavas, and this signifies that although God is equally friendly to all he gets offended too when His own beloved ones, the saints and devotees are hated. Hence offending the devotees of God tantamounts to offending God himself.

In the biography of the Sri Vishnavas figures the sage Parasara Bhattarya who had two wives. One day when he was in a jovial mood with them he asked one of them what she thought of him. She promptly replied "as husband" Then he put the same question to his other wife. She replied "as saviour." Evidently the first reply breathes worldliness while the other spirituality. To the latter the sage Parasara Bhattarya was of the spiritual value.

Bearing on the subject in hand there is a story from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. Rishi Yajnavalkya had two wives, Maitraeyi and Katyayani. He intended to give up the world and retire to the forest for contemplating on God. Before doing so he wanted to divide his property between his two wives At the prospect of getting property Katyayani was very happy, while Maitreyi put to him the question why he wished to retire to the forest. The husband replied—अमृतस्य तु नाशास्ति वित्तेन—"Immortality

cannot be purchased with riches." So I abandon it and take to spirituality. Maitreyi promptly replied that she too would like to renounce and go with him to the forest to share in his spiritual pursuits that would ensure immortality.

From what has been said above it would be seen clearly that the greatest importance was attached to spiritual values in India. How this spiritual ideal has deteriorated during the British rule in India is told by Prof. Radhakrishnan in his latest book on *Indian Philosophy*, volume II. He says—"It is easy to understand the feeling of the Indians of the beginning of the nineteenth century who after generations of public strife and private suffering welcomed the British rule as the dawn of a golden age; but it should be equally easy to sympathise with the Indian feeling of the present day that the spirit of man craves, not comfort but happiness, not peace and order but life and liberty, not economic stability or equitable administration but the right to work out one's own salvation even at the cost of infinite toil and tribulation. Even non-political virtues do not thrive in the absence of political autonomy. British rule has given India peace and security but they are not ends in themselves. If we are to put first things first then we must admit that economic stability and political security are only means, however valuable and necessary, to spiritual freedom. A bureaucratic despotism which forgets spiritual ends for all its integrity and enlightenment cannot invigorate the peoples beneath her sway and cannot therefore evoke any living response in them. When the founts of life are drying up when the ideals of which the race stood for millenniums, the glow of consciousness, the free exercise of faculty, the play of life, the pleasure of mind and the fullness of peace, pranaramam, mana-anandam, santi-samriddham, are decaying, it is no wonder that the Indian is conscious only of the crushing burden and not of the lifted weight. It is no use speaking to him of the magnitude of Britain's work, for the verdict of history is passed on the spiritual quality of the achievement." If the Westerners are the faithfull followers of the "coloured" Christ, they must attach spiritual value to their mission on earth and carry out their holy Master's Commandment "I come not to destroy but to fulfil." Conservation of spiritual values wherever found ought to be the slogan of the coming civilisation. India presents that ideal to the world to day, and let us hope that the West would not be slow to recognise it and profit by it.

THE APOCALYPSE UNVEILED *

By Swami Prabhavananda

CHAPTER II.

I have explained in the previous chapter, that the seven Churches represent symbolically the seven centers or *Chakras* in the body. The awakening has now come and the neophyte understands the existence of the spiritual force within himself. He has not yet the actual vision or realization of these centers, but he does know that they exist and also that they have to be conquered. The *Kundalini* or coiled up spirtual force must be released; it must pass through, and by doing so, conquer all the centers. To each of these *Chakras* (churches) is sent a message, and in these messages we find the nature and function of each revealed. A reward in the form of particular powers is promised on the conquest of each *Chakra*.

In the message to the church of Ephesus which stands for the *Muladhar Chakra*, we find its nature and function indicated. This *Chakra* which is situated below the genitals and above the anus, is said to be the seat of the subconscious mind. In it are stored the impressions—good and bad—of all our past deeds and actions.

Nothing is lost in this universe. Whatever we do or think leaves an impression in our minds. Our present life is the result of our past deeds. They are not lost but remain as a bundle in the subconscious mind. As we turn from the material towards a higher spiritual life, we find that these evil impressions stand in the way of our progress Then comes the struggle to free ourselves from them. † Herein we find the idea that we must all work for our freedom and happiness. When we pursue the evil things of the world, we are seeking the same ideal, though unconsciously. Through bitter experience we find that these give us neither freedom nor happiness. We believe them to be "apostles" but

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* At the earnest request of some students of the Vedanta Society of Portland Oregon, U.S.A., to explain the Christian Bible, the Swami has taken up "The Revelation of St. John the Divine"—the last and the most misunderstood book of the New Testament—for his Thursday meditation class. His interpretation of the "Revelation" the Greek word for which is Apocalypse, has created a keen interest among the students and will, we hope, be of interest to our readers.—Ed.V.K.

† Rev. 2 : 2.

after repeated disappointments we at last awaken to their real nature and realize that they can never give us that which we are seeking. In spite of discouragement however, we never lose hope of ultimately reaching the ideal.* Forced onward by an irresistible urge, which we perhaps do not understand, but which is stronger than life itself we keep on seeking to realize that ideal of freedom and bliss which, is to be found only in God.

Now the *Muladhar Chakra* lies at the base of the spinal cord and is directly related to the *Sahasrara* or the highest center in the brain, wherein is said to be existing the Paramashiva—the Supreme Lord. The *Kundalini*—the coiled up energy—which is also spoken of in mystical language as the Divine Mother, is in the *Muladhar* or lowest center. Her real place is in the *Sahasrara* where her Lord, the Supreme, resides. The object of the whole process is to release this coiled up energy which will then arise to the center in the brain. The tasks of regeneration will then be complete. The first step toward regeneration or the attainment of freedom is to "remember" the real nature of the self and "repent".†

[The word "repent" is translated from the Greek word *metonia*. It is found many times in the New Testament and literally means "changing the mind".]

This is quite different from the ordinary conception of the meaning of the word entertained by the modern Christian world. In Vedanta, we are taught that to brood over our mistakes is futile. Evil is conquered by good not being merely sorry for the evil This is also the real teaching of the New Testament. *Change the mind*. Think on the positive ideal. Change the mode of thought. Think constructive thoughts, rejecting all that are destructive. Instead of dwelling on this transitory existence place the mind on the Immortal, the Everlasting Spirit. ‡ It does not mean here literally, that the candlestick will be removed or that the church or center will become non-existent but that, unless we truly struggle towards the higher life—make a real effort at self-regeneration—the centers will become as though non-existent to us.

Ordinarily the face of the *Kundalini* or Serpent Power which is in the *Muladhar Chakra* is upward ; but in those persons who

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* Rev. 2 : 3 † Rev. 2 : 4 ‡ Rev. 2 : 5

are vile and wicked for whom it will take many lives or even a whole cycle to awaken); the face of the serpent is downward. In ordinary individuals the quality of this *Chakra* retains somewhat of that higher love and is therefore more or less averse to sensuality. Though many *are* sensual, there are very few who love the grosser forms of sensualism. *

[The Nicolaitans were a pseudo occult sect, given up to the grossest forms of sensuality, practising Phallic sorcery with the "consecrated women" of the temples in its most unclean form.]

The reward to the conqueror of this first center is "to eat of the tree of life." He attains to the memory of the past incarnations of his life.

cf. Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms:—We know our past incarnations by *Sam-yama* or concentration on the *Samskaras* or the subconscious mind.

"And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write;" Smyrna stands for the *Swadhisthan Chakra* which is situated at the root of the genitals. Here is sounded the warning of the temptations. After the *Kundalini* is roused from the first center, all our subconscious impresssions of the past, both good and evil, are released. They appear before us and battle for supremacy. These are very real temptations. They are the things which were wont to give us pleasure and though now, wiser grown, we would shun them as evil, at times they appear to us in the guise of good and unless we practise discrimination we will fall into the snare once more. †

[The word 'Jew' is used in the Apocalypse in its Kabalistic sense; "The stone becomes a plant, the plant an animal, the animal a man, the man a Jew and the jew a God."]

In studying the lives of Christ, Buddha or other great sages and teachers we find they all met and conquered these same temptations—impressions or *Samskaras* of the past. It is good to know that such trials, though terrific at the time do not last long There is nothing to fear; ultimately, we too will gain the victory. In crude mythological language these temptations are represented as the temptations of Satan or Mara (the Satan of the Buddhists). In actuality, Satan is not a separate entity. He is within ourselves—is our own mind—wherein are stored all past memories. The inner teachings of Vedanta represent this Satan as the *Papa Purusha* or

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* Rev.: 2: 6. † Rev.: 2: 9

the sinful man within. Those who have studied the life of Sri Ramakrishna know how he told of his own experience with this *Papa Purusha.* He said that this sinful man of dark complexion came out of his own body and a white luminous body came out also and he watched the battle between the two, and the ultimate victory in which the dark man was killed. The reward to the conqueror of this center is conscious immortality. "He that overcometh shall not be hurt in the second death."

To be continued.

THE HINDU VIEW OF LIFE *

By Swami Vedantananda.

This handy little book contains a series of four illuminating lectures delivered last year by Prof. Radhakrishnan under the Upton Foundation at the Manchester College, Oxford. It embodies an admirable defence and interpretation of Hindu culture in both its ideal and practical aspects. In the first lecture on "Religious Experience" the learned Professor ably points out that the Hindu ideal of religion is the direct experience of the highest Truth, to be realised by subordinating intellect to intuition and dogma to inward realisation. He rightly says that according to the Hindu, "religion is not the acceptance of academic abstractions or celebration of ceremonies but a kind of life or experience. It is insight into the nature of reality (darsana), or experience of reality (anubhava)." And this "religious experience is of a self-certifying character. It is Svatassiddha. It carries its own credentials."

In his second lecture on "Conflict of Religions" the author speaks of the attitude of "comprehensive charity with which Hinduism regards other religions. "Hinduism," he observes, "is wholly free from the strange obssession of the Semetic faiths that the acceptance of a particular religious metaphysics is necessary for salvation, and non-acceptance thereof is a heinous sin meriting eternal punishment in hell."

In the third and fourth lectures on "Hindu Dharma" he presents the practical side of Hinduism, the life and conduct that

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* By Prof S. Radhakrishnan, King George V Professor of Philosophy, Calcutta University. Published by Messrs George Allen of Union Ltd., Ruskin House, 40 Museum Street, London, W. C. I. Pp 33. Price 5s.

leads to spiritual realisation. He describes the four stages of life ending in that of the Sannyasins who "embody in their own spirit the freedom of the world, take on the wideness of the whole earth, dwell in love and walk in righteousness." He further points out the "democratic" principles underlying the institution of caste according to which "each racial group should be allowed to develop the best in it without impeding the progress of others."

The task of the exponent of Hindu culture is not only to interpret but also to defend it against the attacks of unjust critics. To the oft-repeated charge that Hinduism is nothing but a baffling diversity of forms and ceremonies the Professor replies—"Every tradition which helps man to lift his soul to God is held up as worthy of adherence . . . . Hinduism is therefore not a definite dogmatic creed, but a vast, complex, but subtly unified mass of spiritual thought and realisation." Some people take Hinduism to be a jumble of polytheism, monotheism and monism. This is a wrong view. The truth is, as the Professor observes, that "Hinduism accepts all religious notions as facts and arranges them in the order of their more or less intrinsic significance. Hinduism insists on our working steadily upward and improving our knowledge of God. 'The worshippers of the Absolute are the highest in rank; second to them are the worshippers of the personal God; then come the worshippers of the incarnations like Rama, Krishna, Buddha; below them are those who worship ancestors, deities and sages, and lowest of all are the worshippers of the petty forces and spirits.'"

Hinduism is said to be a non-missionary religion. This is not correct. Hinduism possesses a tremendous power of assimilation. "Only," as the author points out, "its missionary spirit is different from that associated with the proselytising creeds. It did not regard it as its mission to convert humanity to any one opinion. For what counts is conduct and not belief. Worshippers of different gods and followers of different rites were taken into the Hindu fold. . . . The ancient practice of Vratyastoma, described fully in the *Tandya Brahmana*, shows that not only individuals but whole tribes were absorbed into Hinduism."

Prof. Radhakrishnan clearly points out that the much misunderstood Law of Karma does not imply fatalism and a denial of human freedom. "The principle of Karma reckons with the material or the context in which each individual is born. While it regards the past as determined, it allows that the future is only

conditioned. The spiritual element in man allows him freedom within the limits of his nature. . . . The Law of Karma encourages the sinner that it is never too late to mend. It does not shut the gates of hope against despair and suffering, guilt and peril."

To the charge that the Hindu idea of divine immanence cuts at the very roots of ethics, the Professor very ably replies—"The Hindu view rebels against the cold and formal conception of God Who is external to the world, and altogether remote and transcendent. . . . The indwelling of God in the universe does not mean the identity of God with the universe. . . . Hindu thought takes care to emphasise the transcendent character of the Supreme. 'He bears the world but by no means lost in it.'"

His defence of the Hindu ideal of womanhood is illuminating. The Hindu social system advocates greater control in the case of women than of men, but this has its own reasons as the author points out—"While man is expected to take to the worldly pursuits (yajna-pradhanya), woman is capable of great heights of self-control and self-denial (tapa-pradhanya). The stricter code of morality applied to women is really a compliment to them, for it accepts the natural superiority of the women. But the modern woman, if I may say so, is losing her self-respect. She does not respect her individuality and uniqueness, but is paying an unconscious tribute to man by trying to imitate him. She is fast becoming masculine and mechanical. Adventurous pursuits are leading her into conflict with her own inner nature."

Professor Radhakrishnan has also tried to remove the misunderstanding about the doctrine of Maya, which according to some, "is supposed to repudiate the reality of the world and make all ethical relations meaningless." But unfortunately he does it in a somewhat faltering manner. Nay he himself seems to be confused by Maya. He is quite right when he says—"Sankara repudiates the subjectivism of Vijnanavadins and affirms the extramental reality of objects. . . . Sankara distinguishes dream from the waking experience and warns us against a confusion between the two." But it will not do for the Professor to forget that the great teacher of the Vedanta allows to the world only a relative but not an absolute existence. From one standpoint the man of knowledge sees the mirage of the world as a mirage and is not tempted by it. But this mirage vanishes away and the thing-in-itself is revealed when he takes a different point of view. Then there arises the question not of "re-interpretation" but of actual

denial of the phenomena. Sankara is very clear on the point when he says—"Scriptural passages declare that for him who sees that everything has its Self in Brahman the whole phenomenal world with its actions, agents, and results of actions is non-existent. Nor can it be said that this non-existence of the Phenomenal world is declared (by Scripture) to be limited to certain states; for the passage 'Thou art That' shows that the general fact of Brahman being the Self of all is not limited by any particular state. Moreover, Scripture declares that unity is the one true existence while manifoldness is evolved out of wrong knowledge." Thus from the standpoint of the highest knowledge Sankara denies not only the independence but even the very existence of the world, as the world. This denial of the phenomenon implies the affirmation of the noumenon or Brahman. If he asks us, as the Professor says, "to hold fast both ends"—God and the world, he does so because "so long as a person has not reached the true knowledge of the unity of the Self, it does not enter his mind that the world of effects with its means and objects of right knowledge and its results of actions is untrue." It has become a fashion with a certain class of our philosophical writers to quote stray passages from the utterings of Sankara and to interpret his monism in a non-monistic way. It is unfortunate that the author of the "Hindu View of life" also has taken this mistaken view.

Prof. Radhakrishnan's theory of liberation lacks the clearness and strength of realisation. It is even more unsatisfactory than his interpretation of the doctrine of the Maya. "When one individual," he observes, "completes his purpose, he develops the universality of outlook characteristic of perfection, but retains his individuality as a centre of action. When the whole universe reaches its consummation, the liberated individuals lapse into the stillnsss of the Absolute." He seems to be afraid of this supposed loss of individuality in the "absolute stillness" of Moksha. And he wants even the liberated souls to retain their individualities so long as the world process goes on. From the "relative" standpoint the world continues to exist either in the manifest or unmanifest state. So the argument—no cessation of the world process, no liberation—cannot be easily set aside even on the plea of what the Professor calls "a frustration of the purpose of God." Prof. Radhakrishnan's theory of Sarvamukti or the liberation of all at the some time appears to be influenced by the pet ideas of some of the modern speculative philosophers of the West. The Jivanmuktas (emancipated souls, so long as they live in the body) certainly try to do

good to mankind out of the fullness of their heart. But that is no reason why they should all be detained until all others obtain to the same state. Whatever may be its "pragmatic" value, the theory is not supported by any recognised Vedantic philosopher, who, on the other hand, holds that it is not given to every soul to be an Adhikarika Purusha—one who retains his individuality even after attaining to the highest knowledge, being entrusted with the special mission of helping the world.

As compared to Prof. Radhakrishnan's conception of liberation that of Swami Vivekananda is more satisfactory and authoritative, The Swami who speaks from direct knowledge, describes the state of perfection not as "a condition of absolute stillness, stagnation, death," but as a positive state of existence, intelligence and bliss. He says, "what becomes of a man when he attains perfection? He lives a life of bliss infinite. He enjoys infinite and perfect bliss, having obtained the only thing in which man ought to have pleasure, namely God, and enjoys the bliss of God. . . . . We have often and often read this called the losing of individuality and becoming a stock or stone. I tell you it is nothing of the kind. If it is happiness to enjoy the consciousness of this small body, it must be greater happiness to enjoy the consciousness of two bodies, the measure of happiness increasing with the consciousness of increasing number of bodies, the aim, the ultimate of happiness being reached when it would become a universal consciousness. Therefore to gain this infinite universal individuality this miserable little prison-individuality must go Then alone can death cease when I am one with life; then alone can misery cease when I am one with happiness itself; then alone can all errors cease when I am one with knowledge itself."

The Swami describes the state of perfection not from an intellectual study but from spiritual experience. Throughout his lectures and writings he "presents the Hindu culture, its philosophy and religion, as he realised them in his own life. And the message of the Swami is steadily spreading itself more and more both in the East and the West. Rightly does Sir John Woodroffe observe—"It is only as time goes on that the figure of the courageous Vivekananda stands forth in the true measure of his greatness. To the great Believers and Sadhakas the first rank is accorded, but there is room and a great present demand for those who like Professor Radhakrishnan can speak as philosophers to those Europeans who are themselves philosophers or for whom philosophy has an interest. For such the Professor has the advan-

tage of possessing an Indian Sangskara which enables him to understand, and knowledge of both Sanskrit and Indian philosophy on the one hand and European philosophy on the other presented in good clear English speech."

The lectures have been printed as they were delivered. But at places the Sanskrit passages quoted are not apt, and the translations of Sanskrit words and phrases are not accurate. Prof. Radhakrishnan seems to be original with a vengeance in some of his views which he may not find possible to substantiate. The book ought to have been carefully edited with the help of a Sanskrit scholar before its publication.

The work is very timely and deserves wide circulation. We have read it with great pleasure and heartily commend it to our readers.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Mahatma Gandhi on Sister Nivedita.

In Mahatma Gandhi's story of "My Experiments with Truth" there appeared unfortunately certain inaccurate remarks on Sister Nivedita,—which came as a surprise to her innumerable admirers and especially to those who knew her intimately. Our comment on the above remarks was published in the June issue of the *Vedanta Kesari*. The *Modern Review* also tried to correct Mahatma Gandhi's wrong impression about the Sister, and gave a brief estimate of her real nature in its last May number. This having come to his notice, Mahatma Gandhi has frankly acknowledged his limitation of knowledge about the illustrious Sister. Such a frank confession indeed befits a man of his greatness. We reproduce below what he wrote in the *Young India* of the 30th June, 1927—

The *Modern Review* has a paragraph on what occurs in the story of *My Experiments with Truth*, chapter 19, Part III, on Sister Nivedita. After quoting my remarks, the *Modern Review* has :

"The mention of "the splendour that surrounded her," without any other details conveys a wrong idea of Sister Nivedita's mode of living. The fact is, at the time when Mr. Gandhi saw her, she was the guest of Mrs. Ole Bull and Miss Josephine Macleod at the American Consulate, and, as such, was not responsible for the 'splendour'. Her ascetic and very simple style of living in a

tumble-down house in Bosepara Lane, Baghbazar, is well-known to her friends and acquaintances.

"We do not know, whether Mr. Gokhale spoke to Mr. Gandhi in English and actually used the word 'Volatile' to describe her; for what has appeared in *Young India* is translated from the Gujarati *Navajivan*. But whoever may be responsible for the use of the word 'Volatile' has wronged her memoy. Sister Nivedita had her defects, as in fact even the greatest of mankind had and have, but volatile she was not, in any sense of that word. As English is not our Vernacular, we have consulted two dictionaries on our table to find out its exact meaning as applied to human beings. The Pocket Oxford Dictionary defines it to men 'of gay temperament, mercurial' In Webster's New International Dictionary the explanation given is 'light hearted; airy; lively; hence, changeable; fickle.' Sister Nivedita was a very serious-minded person, noted for her constancy and steadfast devotion to the cause of Hinduism and India.

"The reference to 'her overflowing love for Hinduism is quite just and accurate."

I gladly reproduce this correction. For I never knew the fact, till I saw the note in the *Modern Review* that I had met the deceased not at her own place but at a guest's. The reader has to recognise my painful limitations. My reading is so poor that I have not read, much though I should like to have, the lives even of those who have contributed to the making of Modern India. My only consolation is, that the poverty of my reading is not due to laziness on my part, but a life of ceaseless action and full of tempest from the early youth left no time for much reading. Whether on the whole I have lost or gained thereby is to me a debatable question. But if it is a gain, it has been achieved in spite of myself. I can therefore claim no credit for it. And if in the story that I am writing from week to week, I deal with men and women, I do so only in so far as such reference is necessary for showing the working of my mind, so far as I can in my search for Truth. I am therefore leaving out innumerable instances in life, which would be certainly otherwise interesting, as also references to several men and women. And it will be unjust to those whom I am obliged to refer in the story and to me, if the reader concludes, that the estimate that I may give about persons is my final statement or true in fact. Such references should be regarded merely as the

impression left upon my mind at the time to which they may relate. I introduced Sister Nivedita, Sami Vivekananda, Maharshi Devendranath and others in the story simply to illustrate the point, that even then my political work in South Africa was an integral part of that search, which was never once subordinated to the political work. It has therefore given me pleasure to reproduce the paragraph in thc *Modern Review* at the very first opportunity after reading it.

As to the use of the word 'Volatile.' Though the translation is not mine, I cannot dissociate myself from its use, because as a rule I revise these translations. and I remember having discussed the adjective with Mahadev Desai. We both had doubts about the use of the adjective being correct. The choice lay between volatile, Volent and fanatical. The last two were considered to be too strong Mahadev had chosen Volatile and I passed it. But neither he nor I had the dictionary meaning in view.

What word Gokhale used I can not recall. The word used in the original writing is *tej* I have a full recollection of the conversation between Sister Nivedita and myself. But I do not propose to describe it. No fault in the translation or the original can possibly damage the memory of one who loved Hinduism and India so well. It will ever be cherished with gratefulness.

THE INDIAN CHURCH BILL

The British House of Lords has passed the second reading of the Indian Church Bill. The Bill is intended "to provide for the dissolution of the legal union between the Church of England and the Church of England in India." Its object is thus to secure autonomy for the Indian Church by making it a voluntary association legally entitled to manage its own affairs like other churches of the same communion in the Self-Governing Dominions, the United States, China and Japan.

But the freedom proposed to be granted is limited. The Indian Church is to be a communion with the Church of England.

The Indian Government will continue its present practice of maintaining a number of Anglican Chaplains and Churches. But in the interest of the members of the Church of England temporarily resident in India, particularly the military and the civilians, the service to be conducted in these churches shall be similar to that in use in the Church of England. The Bill also provides that if

the Indian Church ceases at any time to be in communion with the Church of England, the Governor-General of India in Council shall be at liberty to resume complete control over the churches maintained by it.

The Bill may satisfy a large number of Indian Christians who hope to enjoy some autonomy in their Church Government. But the majority of the members of the official and unofficial European and Anglo-Indian community seem to be very suspicious about it.

Evidently to disarm Indian opposition Lord Birkenhead very cleverly remarked that the Bill would be welcomed not only by the Indian Christians but also by all Indians generally, " having regard to the appreciation Indians attached to the spiritual as distinct from the material side of life." But what is the real attitude of the vast non-Christian community in India who have to bear the main burden of the Ecclesiastical Department of the Indian Government ?

It is a pity that Indian journalists and leaders are not paying the necessary attention to the Bill. Many of them naturally feel that all opposition will be futile and the Government will do whatever it pleases in the matter. But still in the name of justice and equity vigorous protests should be made against the Bill by which both the British and Indian Governments propose to perpetuate a great wrong only in a different legalised form and under a slightly different name.

India's conception of spirituality so diplomatically referred to by Lord Birkenhead demands that no particular church, whether it is called Anglican or Indian, should be maintained at the expense of a vast majority of people professing faiths other than Christianity. When the Indian Church measure comes into force, the salaries of the bishops and archdeacons will no longer be borne by the Indian Government. This is only a very small relief. The poor non-Christian tax-payer should be completely freed from the heavy burden of maintaining a proselytising church ever ready to undermine the ancestral faith of those who are being made to support it at present. Anglican Christianity is not the State religion of India. As such there is absolutely no justification on the part of the Indian Government in maintaining the Anglican Church in India, even on the plea of fulfilling its so-called " historic obligations " towards its military and civil servants belonging to the Church of England. Let the Anglican community in India and the Church of England maintain the Anglican Churches and chaplains if they

want them. Strict religious neutrality demands that no particular religion or denomination should enjoy the special favour of the State. What is needed, therefore, is not an Indian Church Bill, but a Bill for the disestablishment and disendowment of the Anglican Church in India. No Christian church should any longer draw upon the meagre resources of India for its support.

There is another side to the question. The Indian Church to be truly Indian should heartily sympathise with the national aspirations of the Indian people. Besides, it must imbibe the universal spirit of Indian culture, and work along with other religions and creeds for the all-round well being of all communities. This will be possible only when it ceases to be a foreign organisation, and is fully relieved of "the continued pressure of the dead weight of the State connection on the episcopal and clerical mind," as Mr. C. F. Andrews put it. It is for the Indian Christians to decide whether, or not they should try to free the soul of the Indian Church from the domination of Government, and make it a living force. Let them not forget that the words of their Prophet,—" For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"—are as true of individuals as of the Church.

THE TWO DANGERS BEFORE ISLAM

'It is perfectly comic,' writes "A Mohammadan Indian" in the *Indus*, 'how a person whose, perhaps, father became a Mussalman, or quite possible who has himself just embraced Islam, waxes eloquent about "our great Muslim culture," "our great Muslim brotherhood." The whole position is entirely false, utterly impossible.' Yet there are many among the Indian Mussalmans who are trying to make the impossible possible!

It is indeed amusing to see how a "raw" convert into Islam disclaims all his ancient heritage, and tries to trace his descent directly from Mohammad himself. And further, he comes to look upon his Hindu brethren as "Kaffirs," and even thinks of earning some religious merit by getting these "Kaffirs" converted into Islam. This fanatical spirit is being bred among the Mussalman masses not only by the ignorant Mullas and Maulanas, but even by the most learned among them.

In a recent speech delivered at Akola, Maulana Mahammad Ali is reported to have said that he considered that his religion was the only true religion in the world, and he hoped that a day would come when not only Hindus but others also would embrace

Islam. Here, too, we see an illustration of hoping for the impossible. However, to the credit of the Maulana it must be said that he urged his co-religionists to purify and correct themselves and act according to the injunctions of Islam. But there are thousands of Moslem priests who do not put any stress on leading a better religious life. On the other hand they only tend to call up the worst passions in the masses in the fair name of religion. These unscrupulous religious propogandists are rousing the fanaticism of the ignorant Mussalmans to such an extent that many among them would like to increase their fold by tricks and force, even by abducting Hindu women and children. It is the urgent duty of thoughtful Mussalmans to put a stop to this dangrous tendency among their ignorant co-religionists, which otherwise will ultimately lead to the degeneration of their community.

Besides fanaticism, extra-territorial patriotism is another grave danger that faces the Indian Mohammadans to-day. It was very much encouraged by the ill-fated Khilafat movement which, contrary to the expectations of Mahatma Gandhi, increased the breach between the Hindus and Mussalmans in India. It took the spirit of "Moslem brotherhood" to such a ludicrous extent that Indian Mussalmans became practically oblivious to the miseries of even their co-religionists at home. During devastating floods and famines, Hindu organsations were trying to alleviate the distress of the sufferers the majority of whom were sometimes Mussalmans. The relief works were badly suffering from want of funds. But still vast sums of money were being collected by the Mohammadan leaders and sent abroad for supporting wars in Islamic countries. With a deep pathos does the Mussalman writer observe—'We Mussalmans, may be callously indifferent to the gravest events at home, but every gentle restle of leaves in far-off Turkey or Africa is accompanied by the wildest and most unnatural breaking of our dear, sympathetic hearts. Millions of our own poor countrymen are dying of exposure and starvation. We cannot clothe or feed them; we are too poor. But we can afford to send millions of rupees to support wars in distant lands in which we have no interest except that they concern some people, who also happen to call themselves Mussalmans. Such is our whole-hearted generosity that we do not even mind not getting simple thanks for the "widow's mite" we can so ill afford. Our co-religionists affection for us is so deep and sincere, that they cannot bear to go through the futile and awkward formality of displaying their gratitude in any way; they content themselves with just feeling it! This is the most

remarkable part of the whole heart breaking business. No one can fail to observe that this great "Muslim brotherhood" exists only for us, Indian Mussalmans. No one else has a notion of it. Turkey may go to dogs, but the fact does not trouble either the Moroceans, or the Egyptians, or the Persians, or the Afghans, or anyone else. Yet our Indian Mussalmans butt in and "kick up an infernal row."' We wish the Indian Muslim leaders would ponder over these thoughts and find that a change in their mentality will do good not only to the community but also to the country.

SLACKENING OF RELIGIOUS FERVOUR IN ENGLAND

From his personal experience of England, Prof. J. Takakusu makes some very interesting observations in the *Young East* regarding the attendance in churches on Sundays. During his student days, more than thirty years ago, the Professor used to attend church services on Sundays (rather reluctantly, he points out) because he had no other way of spending the Sabbath. He has visited Europe four times, after finishing his studies, and every time he used to attend the churches on Sundays. His opinion is "that within the past twenty or thirty years Europe has gone through a great, even a sweeping, change in the domain of thought."

His remarks about the conditions in England then and now have special significance. More than thirty years ago when he first visited England as a student, no boarding house, he says, would tolerate a student who would stay at home and continue his studies on Sunday. No sports or other amusements were available in those days. It was under such circumstances that the Professor was obliged to attend the church services on Sundays. And he observes that "in those days, every church was filled to capacity and the sentiment of the people at large towards the church was exceedingly reverential. I also found missionary zeal to be very intense, the popular sympathy for heathens being of such depth that many earnest young men and women went out as missionaries in pagan countries and money was always liberally given for their support."

Before the Russo-Japanese war, it was one of the cherished objects of the English Christians to convert the whole of the Japanese people to Christianity in fifty years. But when Japan came out victorious in the war, the proselytising zeal was almost completely damped and the missionaries came to hold that it was a waste of both labour and money to try to propagate Christianity

among the Japanese people. The Professor thinks that this was due to the fact that the Japanese professed an advanced form of Buddhism as their religion. Whatever may be the cause there is no doubt that political and other considerations must have contributed very largely to this change in the angle of vision. The religion of the people of India is in no way less evolved than that of the Japanese and yet the missionary zeal in India has not diminished very much. The truth seems to be that Christian missionaries find a congenial soil for their work in countries which are politically weak or under foreign domination.

Prof. Takakusu finds a great slackening in the religious enthusiasm of the English people after the Great War, and as its result there is a tremendous fall in church attendance. He observes, "On my last visit to England, I was amazed to find church attendance so poor that it appeared to have dwindled to one-tenth of that of the pre-war days. Lest I might fall into error in my judgment, I visited a goodly number of churches and those of different denominations. Not only that, I inspected conditions prevailing in churches and chapels in cities as well as in the country. It was the same everywhere."

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Gods in Exile—By J. J. Van Der Leeuw. Published by The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, Pp. 129.

This little book is divided into five chapters—all dealing with ontological questions. The author in his foreword states that the contents of the book are based upon the "awakening of Ego-consciousness which came to *him* some little time ago".

The Gods in exile, as can be seen from a perusal of the book, are none other than the human souls which have strayed away from the "World of the Divine," which is their true Home. These souls are undergoing misery in this world owing to their identification with their "three bodies viz, the physical body, the body of emotions and the body of thought," and their salvation is in their disentanglement from them and using them as willing instruments. This disentanglement, to use the language of philosophers, is transcending all limitations, is going beyond time, space and causation. When the lower self which finds itself enmeshed in the gross, subtle and causal bodies is sublimated into the higher self, and when the man attains his true nature by thus transcending these limitations he is said to attain salvation or perfection. The author's statement that salvation or perfection "can never be individual" is therefore inexplicable, and is likely to discourage and mislead truly religious aspirants.

In the state of perfection there can be no activity; for all activity presupposes imperfection and the author's attempt to propound that the Ego after attaining its perfection or ego-consci-

ousness (as the author would designate it) has "his *own* radiantly beautiful appearance expressing his mission or genius in the great work of God" is unphilosophical and incompatible with the recorded ultimate experience of the Upanishadic seers.

While we do not venture to discredit the author with the "awakening of Ego consciousness which came to *him* some little time ago" we would wish that the philosophical terms such as self, Atma, perfection, Ego, etc. were used in such a way as to convey to the reader clear and precise ideas so as to enable him to fix the ideal.

The last chapter contains spiritual exercises of which we have little to say; but we leave it to the reader to judge for himself in the light of our remarks how far they will be of use to him.

Vedanta Vindicated—By Rev. J F, Pessein. To be had of the author at Wellington, Nilgiris, South India. Pp. 156. Price 2-4.

The author claims to "have found out that Advaita (psychology excepted) not only is not antagonistic to Catholic philosophy but agrees wonderfully with it in all the most fundamental matters." And as such, he holds it does not deserve the scorn with which it is looked upon by the Christian missionary, but instead, "is worthy of high admiration."

The author is a Catholic priest. He has taken great pains to interpret Vedanta in the light of Scholastic doctrines, and to show thereby the underlying harmony between the two systems as he understands them. But his ultimate object is not so much to vindicate Vedanta as to strengthen the position of his Catholic philosophy. And this he makes a stepping stone for preaching his Catholic religion.

The author cleverly employs the usual tactics of the modern Christian propagandist. First, he tries to establish what he thinks to be the points of agreement with the Vedanta; and then he proceeds to expose what he thinks to be the errors of the Adwaita system, which according to him "come chiefly from religion."

He quotes extensively from the writings of Sankaracharya. And to suit his own purpose he tortures the texts at many places. He brands the interpretations of Max Muller and Deussen as "wholly arbitrary and artificial." A study of Swami Vivekananda's Complete Works would have greatly helped him in a correct understanding of the monistic Vedanta. But unfortunately all that he knows of the Swami's teachings seems to have been derived from a few of his epistles. And his insufficient knowledge in this matter has proved to be "dangerous." He has completely, misunderstood the passages quoted by him from these private letters of the Swami. It is, therefore, no wonder that he

sees in them nothing but "utter intellectual confusion, scepticism and despair," which we fear, are but reflections of his own mind.

We do not know why of all the systems of Hindu thought the author has tried to vindicate the Adwaita philosophy alone. Whatever may be the cause, in the name of vidicating monistic Vedanta he has tried, though unconsciously, to undermine it. He has set up as monism, a fanciful system which, to say the least, is not the Vedanta as interpreted by Sankara.

The author's remarks on the Adwaitic doctrine of the identity of the Jiva and Brahman is amusing. He says—"It is anti-patriotic. For, if there be only one universal Atman there is no room for the Foreigner." The proper place for this meaningless criticism would be under what the author calls "the nonsenses attributed to Adwaita", some of which, however contains good sense although he fails to see it.

The book contains many misstatements about the Vedanta philosophy and religion. But still it is not without its value Through its Scholastic interpretation it attempts to show that along with the points of difference, there are also some points of agreement between the Vedanta and the Catholic philosophy. As such, in spite of its many faults it will prove to be of interest to the students of comparitive philosophy and religion.

Release—By C. Jinarajadasa. Published by Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras—pages 102. Price Re. 1.

The problem of pain and misery has been awaiting its solution from the earliest of times. In this small volume the author attempts to give in his rare style a new poetic interpretation of the paths that lead to salvation. 'Each plan of happiness which we make is in reality always subordinated to another plan, that of cosmic desire though in subtle ways it convinces us that its plan is ours too. It desires food and rest, and then it convinces us that we are hungry and tired; it desires excitement, and then, following its lead, we go in search of change.'

The author speaks of the tendency for divine unfoldment in every soul. But this tendency is defeated in its realisation as our 'natural self' puts on a second self which belongs not to us but to the craving; we do not know that when we think we are expressing our individuality, we are largely its puppets. 'In and through everything, his duality is mingled. . . . Release from the miseries of life begins only when we know this duality in us and refuse any longer to be the tool of what is not our true self.

The chapters on 'Release by Law', Release by Light' and 'Liberation' form very agreeable reading. The birth of the Divine Child and Its message to the three Sisters give a homely touch and mystic significance to the writings of the author, The binding and get up are excellent.

NEWS AND REPORTS

LECTURES BY SWAMI VISVANANDA

Under the auspices of the 'Behar Youngmen's Institute, Patna, Swami Viswananda, President, Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, Khar, Bombay recently delivered two interesting lectures, one on "The Message of Swami Vivekananda" and the other on "Universal Religion." The Swami gave two more addresses on "Bhakti" and "The Message of Sri Ramakrishna" in the local Harisabha Hall and the Gait Library respectively. The lectures left a profound impression on the mind of the hearers.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAM, KHAR, BOMBAY

We have received with great pleasure a copy of the first general report of the Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, Khar, Bombay. It gives an interesting account of the growth and activities of the Ashram which was opened by Swami Sharvananda on the 19th of April 1923 in a rented building at Santa Cruz, Bombay at the instance of the prominent members of the Western India Vivekananda Society of the city. On the 9th April, 1927 this Society has been amalgamated with the Ramakrishna Ashram, showing thereby that the Ashram has justified its existence in the city of Bombay by its manifold activities for the last 4 years. The Ashram now possesses a permanent home of its own at Khar, where it shifted in November, 1925.

The report speaks of no less than 700 lectures delivered by the Mission Swamis on diverse religious topics in and round Bombay. Nor were the activities of the Ashram confined to the city and its suburbs alone. The members of the Ashram also carried the Message of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna to Poona, Kolhapur and Ahmedabad and other places in the presidency. A charitable dispensary was opened by the Ashram in May 1924. And the report adds that 200 patients are being treated there every month. A picture of this steadily growing dispensary has been printed on the cover of the report.

In June 1926 another step was taken by the Ashram in opening a free school for the poorer classes of the locality, which has proved to be a very useful institution, the strength of which has doubled in the course of the last one year.

We fervently hope that the philanthropic public of Bombay will come forward with the necessary help, and enable the Ashram to expand its activities and carry on its labour of love with greater efficiency than at present.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, BENARES

We heartily welcome the Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the Benares Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, which stands to-day as a noble monument of our National Spirit of organisation and service.

Of all the sacred cities of India, Benares may be said to have the largest number of indigent and helpless people. And the great work done by the Home of Service in that city during the year under report becomes evident on taking a cursory glance of the statistics given therein. The account of the results obtained in the In-door and Out-door departments surpasses all previous records. The In-door general hospital with its 108 beds treated 1,679 patients while no less than 22 325 persons were relieved by way of medical aid at the out-door dispensaries, by monthly and weekly doles of rice, money and clothing and other kinds of casual help. As the entries shewn the Savashram rendered service to persons belonging to almost all creeds and communities in India.

We are glad to learn also that year by year the activities of the Home have been increasing —so that besides its indoor and out door medical aid, it maintains seven other departments of relief. These are (a) Refuge for aged-men, (b) Refuge for women invalids, (c) Girls' Home, (d) Home for paralytic patients (e) Dharmasala for poor strangers, (f) Out door help to invalids and poor ladies of respectable families in money and kind and special casual help.

The report makes no exaggeration when it says that the Home has become a temple where the whole nation worships God through Man. 'His highest emblem, and where philanthropy and charity are exalted into worship and communion with God.' It has been so testified to by men like Mr. Mirza M. Ismail, the present Dewan of Mysore, Mr. M. H. Syed of the University of Allahabad, Dr. M. Keshava Pai of Madras, Rev Dr. Stanley Jones and others.

Such a Home deserves help and more help, and we earnestly hope that the public will heartily support it with liberal subscriptions and donations.

All contributions and correspondence with the reference to endowments for the building of wards, etc., should be sent to the Hony. Asst. Secretary, R. K. Mission Home of Service, Laksha, Benares City.